

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**Speaker: Beth Dunford**  
October 13, 2016 - 11:00 a.m.

*Introduction*

**Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn**

President - World Food Prize Foundation

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I'm so proud to be a foreign officer, and we had four yesterday – Ambassador Haslach, Ambassador Burns, Ambassador Chamberlin, Ambassador Crocker. Beth is also a career foreign service officer who is now at USAID. You know, I started my career at USAID. I wanted to go to Europe and be in fancy places, and they sent me to the Mekong Delta. Usually, human resources aren't so perceptive. But Beth is the Assistant to the Administrator, Gail Smith, the USAID Bureau for Food Security and Deputy Coordinator for Development for Feed the Future. And she has a special presentation – just like a commercial in between programs – on Partnering for Progress. Beth, over to you.

**Beth Dunford**

Assistant to the Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau of Food Security

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So, thank you so much for that introduction, Ambassador Quinn. And I really want to thank everyone from this really diverse, committed community for coming together to reassert our collective commitment to global food security, to really celebrate the progress we've made to date, and also recognize the urgency of what we still have to do, as we heard from Jim Kim this morning.

And I understand that this is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Food Prize, and it's truly incredible how far we've come since its founding. And I came into this work about halfway through this journey, nearly 15 years ago. I was a young Food for Peace officer, and I arrived at our mission in Ethiopia in the midst of a famine. And we quickly went to work to feed the millions of people who were starving.

And I just remember that time, thinking back to how helpless I felt, feeding people that you knew would need to come back the next week for more food, the next month for more food, or the next year or couple years down the road from that. But people need to eat, so we did what we had to do. And 15 years later, while emergency situations like this do exist, we are getting better at addressing the root causes of chronic poverty and hunger, and we're actually improving the resilience of people who are most vulnerable to these recurrent shocks.

And so a big driver of this progress has really been Feed the Future, which is an initiative that I think is one of the crowning achievements of this administration when it comes to global development. So, following the world food price spikes in 2007-2008, President Obama created this whole of government initiative that sought to leverage the proven power of agriculture to

reduce agriculture and improve nutrition. And in the years since, Feed the Future has fundamentally altered the way the U.S. Government approaches food security and nutrition.

We're working with a broad spectrum of partners, governments, private companies, universities, researchers, civil societies and aligning directly behind host country government plans. We're helping link producers to market and lifting them out of poverty while also improving communities' nutrition.

So today I am proud to announce the release of Feed the Future's 2016 Progress Report. It charts our continued trajectory toward a food-secure world and really highlights our growing impact. And over the life of the initiative, I just want to throw out a few of the key successes.

Over the life of the initiative, we've partnered with the research community to develop 900 new technologies that are helping farmers increase yields, battle pests, improve nutrition and adapt to climate change. Last year alone we helped nine million farmers and food producers adapt innovations and practices that can help them improve their income and increase nutrition. Since the initiative began, we've helped farmers generate more than \$5 billion in agricultural sales, leverage more than \$600 million from the private sector through over 5,000 public/private partnerships. And this work builds on years of progress, and it's having a real impact on people's lives.

So since the start of the initiative, poverty has dropped between 7 and 36% in some of the areas where Feed the Future is working. And stunting has dropped between 6 and 40% in some of those same areas.

So even the United States Congress has taken note at the success achieved through Feed the Future. And just last July in a strong show of bipartisan cooperation, Congress passed and President Obama signed, the Global Food Security Act of 2016. Now, this significant legislation reaffirms the United States' commitment to ending global hunger, poverty and undernutrition by supporting developing countries to improve their agriculture and food system. And just last week we submitted the U.S. Government's Global Security Strategy to Congress, which really lays out our whole of government plan, explicitly laying out what we intend to do to reduce poverty, hunger and undernutrition.

So our key principle in developing this strategy has been to learn from what's worked and what hasn't worked in the last seven years and really reflect on the global context, including increased urbanization, a growing youth population, increasing fragility, and really climate change. And moving forward, the U.S. Government seeks to address these and other challenges with an emphasis on increasing ag[riculture]-led economic growth, improving resilience, and improving nutrition.

So these efforts, combined with really the work that all of you have done here, is really important to help us take this issue forward. What the last 15 years has taught me is that we can make major progress, but it takes commitment, a shared vision, and a concerted, collective effort, so as to continue to work with all of you as we realize our shared vision for a food-secure future.

Thank you.

## **Ambassador Quinn**

Thank you, Beth, thank you. In 2008 when Senator Obama and Senator McCain were running for president, Norman Borlaug wrote to both of them, urging them to be sure to include global food security in their administration. So it was great advice, and I'm glad the President took it, and the principles of Feed the Future were first announced June 12, 2009, at the World Food Prize Laureate Announcement Ceremony at the State Department.